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Agricultural Situation

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Report Highlights:

"SAWASDEE THAILAND" provides the latest information on the Thai agricultural situation and U.S. export opportunities. In this issue you will find updates on a series of activities with the Thai FDA (measures to control food pathogens, food nutrition labeling, an APEC food defense project, and a hands-on laboratory workshop). See also market opportunities for U.S. exports to Thailand and information on upcoming events.

General Information:



**SAWASDEE
THAILAND**

HOT NEWS FROM THAILAND

Thai Political Update

U.S. citizens traveling to and staying in Thailand should be alert to recent demonstrations. In recent weeks, the United Front for Democracy (UDD)—known as “red shirts”—have been expressing their opposition to the government of Prime Minister Abhisit Vejjajiva. Tens of thousands have been assembling and protesting in the vicinity of Government House. Those of you planning to travel to Thailand can receive updated information at <http://travel.state.gov>.

MARKET ACCESS UPDATE

Thai FDA Measures to Control Food Pathogens

On March 19, the Ministry of Public Health published its Notification Regarding Food Standards for Pathogens in the Royal Gazette. This notification will become effective September 15, 2009 and requires importers of products listed in the notification to present a lab analysis report to ensure products imported are pathogen free or do not exceed maximum specified limits. For further information, please see TH9054.

More on Thai Food Nutrition Labeling

The Thai FDA is reviewing its notification on food nutrition labeling to cover all ready-to-eat meal products and expects the revised regulation will help Thai consumers make good dietary choices using nutrition labels. The Thai FDA is attempting to provide information that will help consumers easily understand the nutritional value of a food and allow consumers to compare products.

APEC Food Defense Pilot Project in Thailand

A Food Defense workshop for select Thai food producers and trade associations in May 2009 represents Phase II of a 3-part series by USDA and USFDA. The workshop follows a March visit by a U.S. delegation to assess the stakeholders’ interest and existing capacity in the food defense area. The Phase III will be conducted in June 2009 with interested individual mode companies as the follow-on food defense plan development.

Thai Officials to Participate in U.S. FDA Hands-on Laboratory Workshop

Following interviews and recommendations by FAS/Bangkok, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration is sponsoring four representatives from the Thai FDA and Department of Medical Science for a workshop on “High-Throughput Methods for Detecting Food-borne Pathogens”. The workshop takes place May 6-9, 2009 in New York City and features in-depth presentations and hands-on sessions covering regulatory and laboratory approaches. More information about the workshop can be found at www.yorkfdaworkshops.org.

MARKET OPPORTUNITIES

DVC Product Presentations

FAS/Bangkok can help you arrange one-on-one meetings with Thai importers via digital video conferencing (DVC). Please contact us for more information at agbangkok@fas.usda.gov.

Showcase Your U.S. Food and Agricultural Products

FAS/Bangkok has initiated the “New Product Showcase Zone” in our office. The display features U.S. food and agricultural products not currently being marketed in Thailand. This is an excellent opportunity to display your products and receive feedback. Please contact agbangkok@fas.usda.gov for additional information.

UPCOMING EVENTS

FAS/Bangkok at World of Food Asia 2009

We will be at World of Food Asia 2009, May 13-15 in Bangkok to promote new U.S. food products provide an update on U.S. products, suppliers, import regulations and promotional activities conducted by cooperators and the office. We would be pleased to share your promotional materials at our booth. Please contact [FAS Bangkok](#) for delivery details. More information about the show can be found at www.worldoffoodasia.com.

All Things Organic Conference and Trade Show

The Organic Trade Association (OTA) is sponsoring two buyers from Thailand (Mr. Suvit Kijjawattana, Managing Director of American European Company and Mr. Shinnapoom Chotkitnusorn, Senior Category Manager of Carrefour Thailand) to participate in North America’s premier all-organic Conference and Trade Show, June 14-19.

US Wheat Associates South Asian Wheat Marketing Conference

U.S. Wheat Associates (USW) will present its world outlook for wheat trade and the 2009 U.S. wheat crop at its South Asian Wheat Marketing Conference in Phuket, June 15-19, 2009. The conference will bring together representatives of U.S. wheat producer organizations, U.S. exporters and members of the South Asian wheat milling and trading community.

Fourth of July Celebration

The American Embassy in Bangkok will be hosting the Annual Fourth of July Celebration for nearly 1,500 guests of diplomatic and business contacts. This is an excellent opportunity to showcase your business by donating wines for the event. Interested U.S. wineries or importers should contact our office at agbangkok@fas.usda.gov.